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also eat field rats and one kind of monkey (*u shrih*). The Syntengs and Lynngams are fond of tadpoles, and the Khasis consider a curry made from a kind of green frog, called *ka japieh*, a *bonne bouche*. They, however, do not eat ordinary frogs (*jakoid*). The Khasis of Mariao, Maharam, Nongstoin and some other Siemships eat the hairy caterpillar, *u'ñiang phlang*.

A staple food which must not be forgotten is the inner portion of the bark of the sago palm tree, *ka tlái*, which grows wild in the forest and attains a large size. The tree is felled and the outer bark removed, the soft inner part is cut into slices, dried in the sun, pounded in a mortar and then passed through a fine bamboo sieve. A reddish flour is obtained, of sweet taste, which is boiled with rice. This flour is said to make good cakes and puddings.

Although the Khasis are such varied feeders, there are some clans amongst them which are prohibited by the ordinance of *sang*, or taboo, from eating certain articles. The following are some instances:—

The Cherra Siem family cannot eat dried fish (*'khá-piah*); the Siem of Mylliem must not eat the gourd (*u patháw*); a fish called *ka'khá-lani* is taboo to some of the *Siem-lih* class. Some of the Wär people must not eat *ka ktung* (preserved fish), and the clan *'khar-um-náid* in Khyrim is debarred from the pleasure of partaking of pork. The flesh of the sow is *sang* to the *'dkhar* clan, although that of the male pig may be eaten.

DRINK.

The Khasis are in the habit of regularly drinking considerable quantities either of a spirit distilled from rice or millet (*ka'iad pudka*), or of rice-beer, which is of two kinds (1) *ka'iad hiar*, (2) *ka'iad um*. Both of these are made from rice and, in some places, from millet, and the root of a plant called *u khawiang*. *Ka'iad hiar* is made by boiling the rice or millet. It is then taken out and spread over a mat, and, when it cools, fragments of the yeast (*u khawiang*) are sprinkled over it. After this it is placed in a basket, which is put in a wooden bowl. The

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quilt, made out of the bark of a tree, which is beaten out and then carefully woven, several layers of flattened bark being used before the right thickness is attained. This quilt is called by the Lyngams "*Ka syllar*" (Garo *simpak*). Food is cooked in earthen pots, but no plates are used, the broad leaves of the *mariang* tree taking their place. The leaves are thrown away after use, a fresh supply being required for each meal.

The Lyngams brew rice beer, they do not distil spirit; the beer is brewed according to the Khasi method. Games they have none, and there are no jovial archery meetings like those of the Khasis. The Lyngam methods of hunting are setting spring guns and digging pitfalls for game. The people say that now the Government and the Siem of Nongstoin have prohibited both of these methods of destroying game, they no longer employ them. But I came across a pitfall for deer not long ago in the neighbourhood of a village in the Lyngam country. The people declared it to be a very old one; but this I very much doubt, and I fear that these objectionable methods of hunting are still used. The Lyngams fish to a small extent with nets, but their idea of fishing, *par excellence*, is poisoning the streams, an account of which has already been given in this monograph. The Lyngams are omnivorous feeders, they may be said to eat everything except dogs, snakes, the *hulok* monkey, and lizards. They like rice, when they can get it; for sometimes the out-turn of their fields does not last them more than a few months. They then have to fall back on Jobstears and millet. They eat arums largely, and for vegetables they cook wild plantains and the young shoots of bamboos and cane plants. The Lyngams are divided up into exogamous clans in the same manner as the Khasis. The clans are overgrown families. The Lyngams have some stories regarding the founders of these clans, of which the following is a specimen:—"A woman was asleep under a *sohbar* tree in the jungle, a flower from which fell on her, and she conceived and bore a female child who was the ancestress of the Nongsohbar clan." Some of the stories of the origins of other clans do not bear repeating. There do not appear to be any hypergamous groups. As with the Khasis, it is a deadly sin to

527 clean. Others break off palm leaves and twigs from trees to decorate themselves and the place. A music ban takes care of the neces-
527 sary noise. The three pigs and goats are re-
• 252 ceived with shouts. Without much ceremony the animals are slain and now the actual festival begins: the cooking, the dancing and the eating.

The people divide into various groups. Some divide the slaughtered animals by the light of a great fire. The pieces of meat are put in one pile, the fat in another. About ten men sit around in a circle and begin to cut the meat into small cubes. These are then placed on little three-sided bamboo sticks. All the rest of the meat, such as lungs, heart, kidneys, and brains are put together in a cooking pot. [620] The girls and women sit at a third fire. They hold the fat and lard on long bamboo sticks over the fire to roast it on all sides by constant turning.
527 The rest of the men dance to the peculiar music. Each person dances alone. They hold long bamboo sticks in their right hands, and in their left hands they hold a bunch of branches from a tree or large leaves. Some make huge turbans for themselves out of rice straw. Decorated thus they hop from one foot to another, make deep bows now to the left, now to the right and alternately swing their bamboo sticks or their bunches of leaves. Others turn around in circles, beating time with their palm leaves. When the dancers are tired they take over the job of cutting the meat and cooking and the others decorate themselves for the dance. In reply to my question, what this all means, I received the following answer: "We are happy and for once we want to have a thoroughly good time. We